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Some key elements of a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

The Group of 21 notes with satisfaction the prompt establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Nuclear Test Ban and adoption of a mandate to negotiate a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). It also notes that the extensive debate on some key elements of a CTBT has taken place and the Working Groups on Verification and Legal and Institutional issues have started their work.

The Group of 21 reiterates that the conclusion of a CTBT is an indispensable measure to put an end to the nuclear arms race and to achieve the complete elimination of those weapons. A CTBT will also be an important milestone for non-proliferation in all its aspects including horizontal and vertical proliferation. Therefore it calls upon the international community, including the Nuclear Weapon States, to urgently conclude the negotiations of a CTBT in 1994.

The principles and elements in order to ensure the early conclusion and effective implementation of a CTBT have already been spelt out in the G-21 Working Paper CD/1231 entitled "Conclusion of a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty". In addition, the negotiations of a CTBT should take into account its following views on some key elements of a CTBT:

(1) Structure and scope of CTBT:

The CTBT should aim at the general and complete cessation of nuclear tests by all States in all environments for all time. In this context, it is relevant to recall that the States Parties of PTBT had declared their commitment to conclude a Treaty "resulting in the permanent banning of all nuclear test explosions, including all such explosions underground". These obligations need to be fulfilled while drawing up the scope and the structure of a CTBT.

The objective of a CTBT should not be to aggravate or perpetuate imbalance and discrimination. Accordingly, the scope of a nuclear test ban also should be directed to the prevention of both the acquisition of nuclear weapons and of the improvement of existing ones. Therefore, a CTBT should not

be seen merely as a non-proliferation agreement but an agreement that can contribute to nuclear disarmament. The ban should be comprehensive and not have

a certain threshold. No tests should be carried out under the pretext for safety purposes. The PTBT phrase "any nuclear weapon test explosion, or any other nuclear explosion" provides a useful starting point in this respect. The coverage of preparatory activities for a nuclear test is a complex issue and requires further study. The treaty should not contain any provision that could be interpreted as restricting the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

The Australian Working Paper CD/1235 on "CTBT: a draft structural outline" provides a useful illustrative structure of a CTBT. These should also include an article on "sanctions".

(2) Verification and compliance:

It is widely recognized that the questions relating to verification and compliance can only be considered in conformity with other aspects of a treaty. Hence, disarmament and arms limitation agreements should provide for adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned in order to create the necessary confidence and ensure that they are being observed by all parties. The form and modalities of the verification to be provided in any agreement depends upon and should be determined by the purpose, scope and nature of the agreement.

Therefore the verification system under a CTBT should be universal in its application, non-discriminatory in character and should guarantee equal access to all States. It should be internationally supervised and technically effective. In this context, an evolutionary approach is preferable.

It is widely believed that the seismic verification will form the core of the future verification system. The Working Group on verification should utilize the important work being done by the Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events (GSE). It should maintain constant liaison with GSE. Mebers of G-21 have participated in GSETT-1 and GSETT-2 experiments. The Group supports GSETT-3 and encourages more countries to participate in it. The seismic technique may be complemented by non-seismic verification techniques after further negotiations prove their technical validity. The verification regime should also be cost effective so that the States parties are not over-burdened by an expensive verification regime.

(3) Organization:

The purpose of a CTBT organization should be to carry out effective implementation of its verification regime. It should have a high degree of technical expertise to be effective. This international organization should have the capability to analyse and exchange the international seismic data and also other non-seismic data. The organization should also be cost effective and not have a large bureaucracy. The utilization of expertise of existing organizations

such as IAEA should also be considered. The costs of the organization and the verification regime should be shared according to United Nations scale of assessment.

(4) Entry into force (EIF):

The CTBT should be able to attract universal adherence. Therefore, it should cover all States. The participation of the nuclear weapon States is essential. EIF should not be complicated to delay the process. The expansion of membership of CD should not be utilized as a pretext to delay the EIF. The issue of the adequate number of States required for EIF also needs to be carefully negotiated.

Conclusion:

More views of G-21 on the above basic elements of a CTBT and other aspects of a CTBT will also be further elaborated in the Working Groups.

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